

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

**NORTHWEST MOUNTAIN REGION
HELENA AIRPORTS DISTRICT OFFICE**

**DRAFT
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
AND
RECORD OF DECISION**

**FOR
RELOCATION OF RUNWAY 16/34**

**AT
RAVALLI COUNTY AIRPORT
HAMILTON, MONTANA**

MARCH 2011

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I. BACKGROUND

Ravalli County Airport is a General Aviation (GA) airport located approximately one (1) mile east of the City of Hamilton, Montana and fifty (50) miles south of the City of Missoula, Montana. The airport has been at this location since the 1930's. The Airport is owned and operated by Ravalli County. The property immediately surrounding the airport is used for agricultural purposes. There is residential development approximately 0.5 miles south of the airport and 0.25 miles west of the airport.

The existing airport property covers approximately 437 acres. Current airport facilities include a 4,200-foot x 75-foot runway (Runway 16-34), a parallel taxiway system, an aircraft parking apron, and taxi lanes for hangar access. Runway 16-34 was reconstructed in 1992. The design pavement strength of the runway is 17,000 pounds single wheel loading. Based on the Montana Aeronautics Division's 2009 Update to the Montana Aviation System Plan, the pavement condition of existing Runway 16-34 is considered good to very good. The existing parallel taxiway and apron pavements are considered poor. Runway 16-34 includes edge lights and Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPIs) on both ends. Additional existing airport facilities include a lighted wind sock and segmented circle, and a rotating beacon.

In 1996, Ravalli County initiated a Master Plan Study to examine current conditions, determine future needs, and develop a plan to assist the County with meeting the future needs at the Airport. This effort resulted in a draft Master Plan Study and draft Airport Layout Plan (ALP). These documents, however, were never finalized.

In 2002, Ravalli County initiated a planning project to update the ALP, including a Narrative Report. This effort resulted in an ALP that indicated a future 5,200 foot long runway shifted 400 feet east and 600 feet north of existing Runway 16-34 (Alternative 4 in the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA)). This ALP was accepted by Ravalli County. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approved this ALP in June 2003 on the condition that relocation or extension of Runway 16-34 could not be done without environmental review and approval.

In July 2003, Ravalli County initiated an Environmental Assessment (EA) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate the environmental impacts of meeting FAA design standards for runway to taxiway separation. After many revisions, a Final Draft EA was released in November 2008. A public hearing was scheduled for January 7, 2009, but was postponed by Ravalli County for further review of the document and additional public input.

In August 2009, Ravalli County determined that additional analysis was needed of the 2008 draft EA including an update to the aviation forecasts, an evaluation of additional alternatives from the 1996 Master Plan and 2002 ALP Narrative Report, review of the potential to relocate the airport, and study of two additional development alternatives requested by Ravalli County. In June 2010 a revised Final Draft EA was released. A public hearing was held on August 31, 2010. Responses to comments received were incorporated into the FEA, dated November 2010. The FEA was accepted by Ravalli County on November 17, 2010, and submitted to the FAA for a final environmental determination.

II. PROPOSED ACTION

Ravalli County is proposing to implement the following major improvements to Ravalli County Airport in order to meet the FAA's required 240 foot separation standard for ARC B-II aircraft. The proposed action includes:

- Construct new 4,200' x 75' runway 93' east of and parallel to the existing runway, including edge lighting and PAPIs.
- Shift runway 1,000' to the north.
- Remove existing runway and lighting system.
- Acquire approximately 78 acres of land for runway development, safety areas, and approach protection.
- Acquire or zone approximately 106 acres for compatible land use.
- Maintain current weight bearing capacity of 17,000 pounds.
- Reconstruct and extend Taxiway B (parallel taxiway) and connector taxiways.
- Reconstruct and expand aprons.
- Install animal control fencing.

III. PURPOSE AND NEED

The Ravalli County Airport currently does not meet FAA design standards for runway/taxiway separation for the type of aircraft currently using the airport and forecast to use the airport during the next twenty years. Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5300-13 contains the FAA standards for Airport Design. The AC uses a coding system, the Airport Reference Code (ARC), to relate airport design criteria to aircraft operational and physical characteristics. The design aircraft is generally considered the most demanding individual airplane or a family grouping of airplanes that has, or is forecast to have during the twenty year planning period, at least 500 or more annual operations (landings and takeoffs are considered separate operations) at the airport.

The FAA's Terminal Area Forecasts (TAF) indicates that Ravalli County Airport is the fourth busiest GA airport in Montana in terms of operations and has more based aircraft than any other GA airport in Montana. The Draft Master Plan Study, the ALP Narrative Report, and the FEA indicate that the appropriate design aircraft for Ravalli County Airport is ARC B-II.

The current separation from the Runway 16/34 centerline to its parallel taxiway is 200 feet. This separation only meets the standard for "exclusively small" (12,500 lbs. or less maximum certificated takeoff weight) aircraft. AC 150/5300-13 requires a runway centerline to parallel taxiway centerline separation of 240 feet for ARC B-II. This separation distance satisfies the requirement that no part of an aircraft on the taxiway centerline is within the runway safety area or penetrates the runway obstacle free zone. Ravalli County is seeking to meet the required 240 foot separation standard for ARC B-II aircraft through its proposed action. Alternatives analyzed to bring the runway into compliance with the separation standard are summarized in Section V below.

Contingent on available funding, it is anticipated that the proposed action will commence in 2012 and will take several years to complete.

IV. THE AGENCY ACTIONS AND APPROVALS

FAA and other Federal and State Agency actions, determinations, and approvals necessary to construct the improvements identified in the proposed action include:

- a. A determination of project eligibility for federal grant-in-aid funds (49 U.S.C. 47101, et. Seq.) for runway construction, lighting, and environmental mitigation.
- b. Determinations under 49 U.S.C. Sections 47106 and 47107 pertaining to FAA funding of airport development, including conditional approval of the airport layout plan (ALP) 49 U.S.C. 47107

- (a)(16), environmental approval (see 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347, and 40 CFR 1500-1508), and determinations under other statutes and regulations discussed in this Record of Decision (ROD).
- c. The issuance of a permit under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Department of the Army Corps of Engineers (COE) which requires permits for the discharge of fill material into waters of the United States. Waters of the United States include the area below the ordinary high water mark of stream channels and lakes or ponds connected to the tributary system, and wetlands adjacent to these waters. The proposed improvements require securing an individual Clean Water Act Section 404 permit prior to project development. Securing an individual permit will require construction or acquisition of compensatory mitigation at a ratio established by the Corps of Engineers.
 - d. A Montana Stream Protection Act 124 Permit must be obtained from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks for any government entity that is proposing a project that may affect the bed or banks of any stream in Montana.
 - e. A general discharge permit for storm water associated with construction activity under the Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) will be obtained from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). As a requirement for this permit, a storm water erosion control plan will be required, specifying the measures that will be employed during construction to control erosion and sediment transport by storm runoff.

V. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The evaluation and conclusions of the alternatives analysis can be found in Chapter 3 of the FEA. The alternatives analysis was undertaken to achieve the runway centerline to parallel taxiway separation standard of 240 feet.

An initial sixteen (16) alternatives for development at the existing site, as well as a discussion of relocating the existing airport, were considered in Chapter 3 of the FEA. The development alternatives included: the No Action alternative; nine alternatives from the Master Plan; three alternatives from the ALP Narrative Report; and three additional alternatives identified during the EA process. Of these, six viable alternatives, all at the existing airport site, were carried forward in the NEPA process for further evaluation. These alternatives are summarized below. Each of these alternatives, except for the No Action alternative, includes shifting the runway to the north in addition to providing the required 240' separation standard.

The recommended runway length to accommodate 100% of small GA aircraft per AC 150/5325-4B, *Runway Length Requirements for Airport Design*, is 5,200' for Ravalli County Airport. The proposed action does not include the lengthening of the runway to the recommended length. To fully assess each alternative, the FEA included an evaluation of the ability to accommodate a future runway extension of 1,000 feet, and a preliminary screening of potential environmental impacts, for each alternative except the No Action alternative. A project involving an extension of the runway to its recommended length is not included in this finding and, if proposed, would require a separate environmental evaluation under NEPA.

The FAA participated in the alternatives analysis, and independently determined that the assumptions and methodology used and the conclusions reached by Ravalli County were appropriate.

Alternative 1 – No Action

The No Action alternative is required by NEPA to be carried forward for all projects. The No-Action reflects existing conditions and improvements that would occur regardless of the proposed action. This alternative keeps the runway at its existing location, and the existing runway centerline to taxiway

centerline separation of 200 feet would remain. This alternative does not meet the purpose and need, since the FAA standard runway centerline to taxiway centerline separation of 240 feet would not be met. Therefore, future rehabilitation of the runway pavement and lighting systems would not be eligible for FAA funding.

Alternative 2 – Relocate Runway 95 feet east, shift Runway 34 threshold 600 feet north.

This alternative includes:

- Construct new 4,200' x 75' runway 95' east of and parallel to the existing runway, including edge lighting and PAPIs.
- Shift runway 600' to the north.
- Remove existing runway and lighting system.
- Acquire approximately 71 acres of land for runway development, safety areas, and approach protection.
- Acquire or zone approximately 99 acres for compatible land use.
- Maintain current weight bearing capacity of 17,000 pounds.
- Reconstruct and extend Taxiway B (parallel taxiway) and connector taxiways.
- Reconstruct and expand aprons.
- Install animal control fencing.

The relocation of the runway 55 feet further east than required by the FAA design standards prevents existing buildings from penetrating the Transitional Surface prescribed by Federal Aviation Regulations Part 77, *Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace* (Part 77). Shifting the runway 600 feet north would remove existing Tammany Lane from the Runway 34 protection zone.

Under this alternative approximately 3,600' of the new 4,200' runway would be constructed within the safety area of the existing runway. Work within the existing runway safety area would require closure of the existing runway. The existing runway would be removed and the ground graded to meet runway safety area requirements for the new runway.

The buildings occupied by the Daly Ditches Irrigation Company would penetrate the approach surface prescribed by Part 77. These buildings (also known as the Hayward hangars) were constructed by Dr. Herbert V. Hayward, an aviation pioneer in the Bitterroot Valley. During World War II, these buildings were used to train female pilots for non-combat missions under the Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP) program during World War II. For these reasons, the buildings are considered historically significant. This alternative would require the acquisition of the Daly Ditches Irrigation Company property and mitigation of the buildings pursuant to the mitigation plan provided in Appendix X of the FEA.

In addition to the impact to the historic buildings, this alternative would impact approximately 3 acres of wetlands (depending on final runway elevations and grading), and riparian areas associated with Gird Creek. A compensatory mitigation plan would be required prior to securing an individual Clean Water Act Section 404 permit.

Alternative 2A – Relocate Runway 93 feet east, shift Runway 34 threshold 1000 feet north

This alternative includes:

- Construct new 4,200' x 75' runway 93' east of and parallel to the existing runway, including edge lighting and PAPIs.
- Shift runway 1,000' to the north.
- Remove existing runway and lighting system.
- Acquire approximately 78 acres of land for runway development, safety areas, and approach protection.
- Acquire or zone approximately 106 acres for compatible land use.
- Maintain current weight bearing capacity of 17,000 pounds.
- Reconstruct and extend Taxiway B (parallel taxiway) and connector taxiways.
- Reconstruct and expand aprons.
- Install animal control fencing.

The relocation of the runway 53 feet further east than required by the FAA design standards prevents existing buildings from penetrating the prescribed Part 77 Transitional Surface. Shifting the runway 1,000 feet north would eliminate the penetration of the prescribed Part 77 approach surface by the Daly Ditches Irrigation Company buildings (historic Hayward hangars), eliminating the need to acquire this property and mitigate the buildings.

Under this alternative approximately 3,200' of the new 4,200' runway would be constructed within the safety area of the existing runway. Work within the existing runway safety area would require closure of the runway. The existing runway would be removed and the ground graded to meet runway safety area requirements for the new runway.

This alternative will impact approximately 3 acres of wetlands (depending on final runway elevations and grading), and riparian areas associated with Gird Creek. A compensatory mitigation plan would be required prior to securing an individual Clean Water Act Section 404 permit.

This option is Ravalli County's proposed action.

Alternative 3 – Relocate Runway 240 feet east, shift Runway 34 threshold 600 feet north

This alternative includes:

- Construct new 4,200' x 75' runway 240' east of and parallel to the existing runway, including edge lighting and PAPIs.
- Shift runway 600' to the north.
- Convert and extend the existing runway to a 4,200' x 35' parallel taxiway, and construct new connector taxiways.
- Acquire approximately 88 acres of land for runway development, safety areas, and approach protection.
- Acquire or zone approximately 98 acres for compatible land use.
- Maintain current weight bearing capacity of 17,000 pounds.
- Reconstruct and expand aprons.
- Install animal control fencing.

The existing runway would be converted into a parallel taxiway, thus providing a runway centerline to taxiway centerline separation of 240 feet. Shifting the runway 600 feet north will remove existing Tammany Lane from the Runway 34 protection zone.

Under this alternative the new runway would be constructed outside of the safety area of the existing runway, and could be completed with the existing runway open. Minimal closure of the airport would be required to construct new connecting taxiways.

The buildings occupied by the Daly Ditches Irrigation Company (historic Hayward hangars) would penetrate the Part 77 approach surface. This alternative would require the acquisition of the Daly Ditches Irrigation Company property and mitigation of the buildings pursuant to the mitigation plan attached in Appendix X of the FEA.

In addition to the impact to the historic buildings, this alternative would impact approximately 2 acres of wetlands (depending on final runway elevations and grading), and riparian areas associated with Gird Creek. A compensatory mitigation plan would be required prior to securing an individual Clean Water Act Section 404 permit.

Alternative 3A – Relocate Runway 240 feet east, shift Runway 34 threshold 1550 feet north

This alternative includes:

- Construct new 4,200' x 75' runway 240' east of and parallel to the existing runway, including edge lighting and PAPIs.
- Shift runway 1,550' to the north.
- Convert and extend the existing runway to a 4,200' x 35' parallel taxiway, and construct new connector taxiways.
- Acquire approximately 82 acres of land for runway development, safety areas, and approach protection.
- Acquire or zone approximately 112 acres for compatible land use.
- Maintain current weight bearing capacity of 17,000 pounds.
- Reconstruct and expand aprons.
- Install animal control fencing.

The existing runway would be converted into a parallel taxiway, thus providing a runway centerline to taxiway centerline separation of 240 feet. Shifting the runway 1,550 feet north would eliminate the penetration of the Part 77 approach surface by the Daly Ditches Irrigation Company buildings (historic Hayward hangars), eliminating the need to acquire this property and mitigate the buildings.

Under this alternative the new runway would be constructed outside of the safety area of the existing runway, and could be completed with the existing runway open. Minimal closure of the airport would be required to construct new connecting taxiways.

This alternative would impact approximately 2 acres of wetlands (depending on final runway elevations and grading), and riparian areas associated with Gird Creek. A compensatory mitigation plan would be required prior to securing an individual Clean Water Act Section 404 permit. Development of the runway to its ultimate (5,200') length at this location would require relocation of a portion of existing Stock Farm Road to the north of the airport.

Alternative 4 – Relocate Runway 400 feet east, shift Runway 34 threshold 600 feet north

This alternative includes:

- Construct new 4,200' x 75' runway 400' east of and parallel to the existing runway, including edge lighting and PAPIs.
- Shift runway 600' to the north.
- Convert and extend the existing runway to a 4,200' x 35' parallel taxiway, and construct new connector taxiways.
- Acquire approximately 110 acres of land for runway development, safety areas, and approach protection.
- Acquire or zone approximately 95 acres for compatible land use.
- Maintain current weight bearing capacity of 17,000 pounds.
- Reconstruct and expand aprons.
- Install animal control fencing.

The existing runway would be converted into a parallel taxiway, thus providing a runway centerline to taxiway centerline separation of 400 feet. The relocation of the runway 160 feet further east than required by the FAA design standards provides the greatest flexibility for future hangar and apron areas compared to the other alternatives. Shifting the runway 600 feet north would remove existing Tammany Lane from the Runway 34 protection zone.

The buildings occupied by the Daly Ditches Irrigation Company (historic Hayward hangars) would penetrate the Part 77 approach surface. This alternative would require the acquisition of the Daly Ditches Irrigation Company property and mitigation of the buildings pursuant to the mitigation plan attached in Appendix X of the FEA.

Under this alternative the new runway would be constructed outside of the safety area of the existing runway, and could be completed with the existing runway open. Minimal closure of the airport would be required to construct new connecting taxiways.

This alternative would impact approximately 2 acres of wetlands (depending on final runway elevations and grading), and riparian areas associated with Gird Creek. A compensatory mitigation plan would be required prior to securing an individual Clean Water Act Section 404 permit.

Summary of Alternatives Analysis

Damage to the natural, biological, and physical environments is not significant for any of the alternatives. Alternatives 1, 2A, and 3A do not require acquisition of the Daly Ditches Irrigation Company property or mitigation of the Hayward hangar buildings. Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 would require acquisition of the Daly Ditches Irrigation Company property and mitigation of the buildings pursuant to the mitigation plan attached in Appendix X of the FEA. Except for Alternative 1, all alternatives impact approximately 2 to 3 acres of wetlands and riparian areas associated with Gird Creek, which can be mitigated as discussed in Chapter 4 of the FEA.

Alternative 1, the No Action, is the environmentally preferred alternative. This alternative causes no damage to the natural, biological and physical environments, has no impact upon historic properties, and fulfills the national environmental policy outlined in NEPA.

After careful consideration of the analysis of the impacts of the various alternatives considered, and the ability of these alternatives to satisfy the identified purpose and need for the proposed facility; and after review and consideration of the testimony at the public hearing, of comments submitted in response to the draft EA, and of coordination with federal, state, and local agencies; and after considering federal policy, the FAA hereby selects the development proposal identified as alternative 2A in the EA as the preferred alternative for federal support.

VI. AGENCY FINDINGS

The FAA makes the following determinations for this project, based upon the information and analysis set forth in the FEA.

- a. The project is consistent with existing plans of public agencies for development of the area surrounding the airport [(49 U.S.C. 47106(a) (1))].

The determination prescribed by this statutory provision is a precondition to agency approval of project grant funding applications. Coordination regarding this proposed project has taken place between federal, state, and local agencies. Evidence of public and agency coordination can be found in Appendix II of the FEA.

- b. The interests of the community in or near which the project may be located have been given fair consideration [49 U.S.C. 47106(b) (2)].

The determination prescribed by this statutory provision is a precondition to agency approval of airport development project grant funding applications. Discussions within the community concerning the level of required improvements to the airport contributed to the lengthy planning and environmental process described in Section I of this document. The preferred alternative requires a temporary closure of the existing runway during construction. Temporary closure of the existing runway will cause a negative economic impact to on airport businesses and their employees and may cause a negative economic impact to other businesses in the community. However, the FEA Chapter 4, section 4.15, Induced Socioeconomic Impacts, section 4.18 Secondary (Induced) Impacts, and section 4.19 Social Impacts demonstrates that the proposed improvements will not cause long term economic disruption or division to the community, will not impede its long term orderly development, and is not in conflict with the comprehensive planning and goals of Ravalli County.

The draft EA was provided to the public and governmental agencies for review and comment. Further, a public hearing was held on August 31, 2010 to provide an additional opportunity for persons to comment on the proposed development. Appendix XI contains the public comments and the agency's responses to comments.

- c. The airport sponsor has taken or will take actions to restrict land uses in the airport vicinity, including the adoption of zoning laws, to ensure the uses are compatible with airport operations [49 USC 47107(a) (10)].

The determination prescribed by this statutory provision is a precondition to agency approval of airport development project grant funding applications. As found in the FEA, Chapter 4, section 4.5 Compatible Land Use, Ravalli County has adopted an Airport Influence Area (AIA) around Ravalli County Airport. The AIA limits the height of new construction and requires permits for development within the AIA. The limit of the AIA is depicted in Appendix VII of the FEA.

- d. Certification from the airport sponsor that it has provided an opportunity for a public hearing [49 USC 47106. (c)(1)(A)(i)].

The determination prescribed by this statutory provision is a precondition to agency approval for grant funding applications for airport development projects involving the location of a runway. Ravalli County conducted a Public Hearing on August 31, 2010. A Summary of Comments to the draft EA, Affidavit of Publication, and minutes from the Public Hearing can be found in Appendix XI of the FEA.

- e. Certification from the airport sponsor that the airport management board has voting representation from the communities in which the project would be located or that the sponsor has advised communities they have the right to petition the Secretary of Transportation about a proposed project [49 USC 47106.(c)(1)(A)(ii)].

The determination prescribed by this statutory provision is a precondition to agency approval of grant funding applications for airport development projects involving the location of a runway. The airport is located approximately one (1) mile east of the City of Hamilton, in Ravalli County, Montana. The Sponsor is Ravalli County, which is governed by five elected Commissioners. Ravalli County is divided into five (5) districts, based on population distribution, with one elected Commissioner from each district. Two of the five county-wide districts include the City of Hamilton and surrounding area. All final decisions related to the project are made by the County Commissioners.

- f. Actions involving construction directly or indirectly affecting wetlands.

Executive Order 11990, Wetlands, requires that there is no practicable alternative to FAA's preferred alternative and that the preferred alternative includes all practicable measures to minimize resultant unavoidable harm to wetlands when actions involving construction directly or indirectly affect wetlands. A wetland delineation of Ravalli County Airport and nearby surrounding property revealed eighteen distinct wetland areas totaling 45.97 acres. Most of these delineated wetlands are located north and east of the existing airport facilities. Alternative 2A, the preferred alternative, will impact approximately 3 acres of wetlands. Except for Alternative 1, all alternatives impact approximately 2 to 3 acres of wetlands associated with Gird Creek, and can be mitigated as discussed in Chapter 4 of the FEA with a compensatory mitigation plan.

g.Finding of No Significant Environmental Impact (40 C.F.R. 1508.13)

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts set forth in the Final EA and in this Record of Decision, it is found that the proposed Federal action [FAA support for the development of Alternative 2A] is consistent with the existing national environmental policies and objectives, as set forth in Section 101(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. In addition, the proposed Federal action, with the required mitigation referenced below, will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102(2) (C) of NEPA. As a result, the FAA will not prepare an EIS for this action.

VII. MITIGATION

In accordance with 40 CFR 1505.3, the FAA will take appropriate steps, through federal funding grant assurances and special conditions, airport layout plan approvals, and contract plans and specifications, to ensure that mitigation actions identified in the FEA for Alternative 2A are implemented during project development. The FAA will monitor the implementation of these mitigation actions as necessary to assure that representations made in the FEA, with respect to mitigation, are carried out. The mitigation actions are listed below.

Wetlands. An individual Clean Water Act Section 404 permit must be secured prior to discharge of fill material into Gird Creek and its adjacent wetlands. Securing an individual permit will require construction or acquisition of compensatory mitigation (at a ratio established by the Army Corps of Engineers). An evaluation of mitigation alternatives for the project site has concluded that compensatory mitigation is available within the same watershed as the airport. Securing compensatory mitigation will result in no adverse effect to wetland resources in the area of the airport for Alternative 2A.

Biotic Resources. Restoration of the natural channel, pattern, dimension, and profile of Gird Creek in reaches within the airport property that have been historically straightened or simplified will occur. To offset proposed impacts to the riparian area, steps will be taken to improve/create a commensurate riparian acreage within the airport property to provide improved fisheries habitat. Where practicable, avoidance or minimization of disturbances to riparian vegetation will occur. Plans will be made to re-vegetate all disturbed areas with desirable species and to implement bank stabilization measures for disturbed channel banks. Re-vegetation strategies will be monitored and maintained by Ravalli County until species have become well established.

Fish passage structures will be installed utilizing bankfull width plus 10 percent to provide for flow complexity within each structure. In addition, natural stream channel techniques will be used, where necessary, to maintain the same stream gradient as the existing conditions.

Construction. A general discharge permit for storm water associated with construction activity under the Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) will be obtained from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). As a requirement for this permit, a storm water erosion control plan will be required, specifying the measures that will be employed during construction to control erosion and sediment transport by storm runoff.

The Contractor will be required to follow FAA guidelines for protecting water quality during construction activities. FAA standard specification P-156 requires that temporary control measures be implemented as necessary to control water pollution, soil erosion, and siltation throughout the construction period. Such measures may include the use of berms, dikes, dams, sediment basins, fiber mats, gravel, mulches, grasses, slope drains, and other erosion control devices or methods.

Asphalt plants and crushers producing surfacing materials for the airport project must have an air quality permit from the MDEQ Permitting and Compliance Division. The supplier of any crushed rock material needed for construction must have an air quality permit from the MDEQ.

VIII. DECISION AND ORDER

Although the "No Action" alternative has fewer developmental impacts than the preferred alternative, it fails to achieve the purpose and need for this project. For the reasons summarized earlier in this ROD and supported by detailed discussion in the FEA, the FAA has determined that Alternative 2A meets the purpose and need for the project with no significant environmental impact.

Having made this determination, the FAA must approve, or disapprove, the agency actions necessary for the project's implementation. Approval would signify that applicable federal requirements relating to airport development planning have been met, and would allow Ravalli County to proceed with the proposed project and to apply for and receive federal funds for eligible items of the proposed development, subject to funding availability. Not approving these agency actions would prevent Ravalli County from proceeding with federally supported development in a timely manner.

The FAA has carefully considered the FAA's goals and objectives in relation to various aeronautical aspects of the proposed project discussed in the Final EA, including the purposes and needs to be served by the project, the alternative means of achieving them, the environmental impacts of these alternatives, the mitigation necessary to preserve and enhance the environment, and the costs and benefits of achieving these purposes and needs in terms of effective and fiscally responsible expenditure of federal funds.

Therefore, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator of the FAA, I find that this project is reasonably supported, and I direct that action be taken to carry out the agency actions discussed more fully in Section IV of this Record of Decision.

Manager, Helena Airports District Office
FAA Northwest Mountain Region

Date

Right to Appeal

This decision constitutes the federal approval for the actions identified above and any subsequent related actions approving a grant of federal funds to Ravalli County. Today's action is taken pursuant to 49 U.S.C., Subtitle VII, Parts A and B, and constitutes a Final Order of the Administrator, subject to review by the courts of appeals of the United States, in accordance with the provisions of 49 U.S.C. § 46110.